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Has Google Replaced the Yellow Pages? What you must know about advertising your local business.

Business advertising used to be so simple. You spoke with your local Yellow Pages ad-rep then came up with a few short lines for the ad, unless you decided to spring for a display ad, then you might have to also come up with a picture, but once you had your ad together, you simply paid a monthly fee, and then answered the phone when it rang. Oh but those simple days of ‘letting our fingers do the walking’ are gone!

A few years ago the internet came into our lives. I was in my late twenties when the internet came on. It was a fairly crude cyber world at first which was mostly uninhabited. I wouldn’t have even thought to look at the internet to find a local dry cleaner, I would have grabbed the yellow pages. But recently I threw out my yellow page books, because after stumbling across them I realized I never use them anymore. Now I go straight to Google. If my 18 year old daughter ask me where she could go to get her car detailed and I suggested she look in the yellow pages she would either say, “What’s their web address?” or all ready be typing, “Car detailer Orange City” into her smart phone. She wouldn’t even know that a book with phone numbers and yellow pages exists.

Let’s face it, it’s a Google world. Most people under 50 search Google first when they need things, even when they want to find a local business. Example, last spring I went to Savannah, Georgia, while there I wanted to visit some local fabric stores. So what did I do? I turned on my new smart phone, opened the web browser, and typed in a search for “Fabric Store Savannah”. I only found a few. Now I know it is getting harder and harder to find fabric stores as less and less people are sewing these days, but I also knew there should be more stores than what the internet search revealed so I decided to check out the yellow pages. Sure enough, there were a couple more stores listed in there. At first I thought, “Oh thank goodness for the yellow pages.” But then I realized, these businesses weren’t on the internet, the place where we look first. They are still stuck in those

simple days when we placed yellow page ads, and now most people don't look at the yellow pages, therefore most people won't find their businesses.

Let's face it, placing a yellow page ad is so much easier for the busy business owner. For one thing you don't have to come up with all that content that it takes to make up a website. Or all those pictures. Or find someone that knows how to create a website. It is all just too much. So you think, "I can just place an ad with an online listing website, such as yellowpages.com, then I don't have to come up with all that content, it will be great I will have my listing and be online." WRONG! Here's the problem with that; as soon as we see the listing we want to look at your website for credibility.

So here's what you need to know: You have to have a web presence. These days that includes websites and social media. Yes, it is more work than placing a Yellow Page ad, and it may cost just as much or more, and there the whole internet marketing world can be overwhelming, but today being on the web is as important as having a phone. Remember there was a time in the world before phones too.

I think we can all agree that Google is quickly replacing the yellow pages even for local businesses. Although for now you may want to continue advertising in the Book, if you really want to drive traffic to your business make sure Google can find you too!